United Nations S/2000/499

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 May 2000

Original: English

Letter dated 29 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward a copy of a letter received today, 29 May 2000, from Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, addressed to the Secretary-General (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Haile **Menkerios**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 29 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Asmara, 29 May 2000

Ethiopia's invasion of Eritrea unleashed two weeks ago, which continues to date with impunity, has created a dangerous precedent not only for Eritrea and its people but also for international law and international norms of behaviour.

We vividly recall the measures that the international community took when Kuwait was invaded by Iraq. Bombing campaigns continue against Iraq to this day.

If countries could resort to naked invasion under the pretext of "asserting control" over "disputed borders", invasion and turmoil would be the order of the day. We would have wars of invasion between Egypt and the Sudan (because of the dispute over the Halaib); Saudi Arabia and Yemen; Iran and the United Arab Emirates; Qatar and Bahrain, Nigeria and Burkina Faso, etc.

As you are aware, Ethiopia is today perpetrating naked invasion against Eritrea while the peace process to resolve the border dispute between the two countries peacefully and legally was and is under way.

Unfortunately, the Security Council has adopted punitive measures without differentiation penalizing the aggressed country equally with the aggressor party. This unfortunate decision can only be interpreted as sanctioning Ethiopia's invasion. It is also difficult to explain in terms of international law or accepted international norms.

Ethiopia continues to perpetrate its invasion unabashedly claiming "that it has a right to invade a sovereign nation to control border areas under dispute".

Ethiopia's invasion has caused the internal dislocation of over 1 million Eritrean civilians. Tens of thousands of others have crossed the border into exile. Agricultural schemes that were under preparation as the rainy season is due have been disrupted, creating a very precarious situation for the next harvest. Millions of Eritreans are therefore exposed to structural food deficit and hunger. Ethiopia is wantonly destroying infrastructure and development projects. Ethiopia's invasion has thus created a very grave situation.

In these dire circumstances, I appeal to you on behalf of the Government and people of Eritrea:

1. To condemn Ethiopia's invasion against a sovereign nation in violation of international law and accepted norms of behaviour, as well as to take punitive measures against the aggressor; and to ensure an immediate withdrawal of Ethiopia from the occupied areas;

2. To lift the unfair and inappropriate Security Council sanctions imposed on Eritrea;

3. To ensure that Eritrea receives due compensation for the destruction caused by Ethiopia's invasion;

4. To extend the necessary assistance to the Eritrean people to alleviate the prevailing emergency situation as well as its long-term ramifications.

In conclusion, I appeal to the Security Council to adopt, urgently and without further delay, a resolution on the basis of the four points outlined above and take concrete measures against Ethiopia's invasion.

(*Signed*) Isaias **Afwerki**
President